



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

without quite knowing what we are certain about; and we must also grant that perfectly definite objects of thought, *i. e.*, objects being thought, may induce the belief-activity and make it refer to themselves in a certain way. In each case we are granting that certain conditions are necessary to induce the credulous attitude, and in neither case are we admitting that the objects believed in depend for their (real or merely believed) existence and nature upon the conscious activity of believing.

WALTER B. PITKIN.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

SELF AS A DEVELOPED FEELING COMPLEX

THE conditions arising in the investigation of self in ultimate analysis are so altogether unlike those arising in every other investigation as to suggest the necessity for a special method of procedure. Here the relatedness of the investigating agency to the investigation is that of the *unknown* setting about the investigation of this same unknown—*itself*. And the way the investigation is usually conducted is still more paradoxical. Here the unknown is naïvely carried along in the investigation—in the personal pronouns employed—as a something the *value of which is already known and taken into account*. Now although the self must in reality be carried along in these investigations, it is necessary, in order that the investigation be rationally conducted, that *its value be discounted* all through the inquiry. And when this discounting is not done, the whole may be reduced to a series of non-sense statements, if the terms employed to represent the object of investigation be substituted for those employed—the personal pronouns—to represent the investigating agency. And the substitution would be legitimate in this case where, as was just pointed out, there is likeness of nature. For instance, ‘when *we* interrogate consciousness’ becomes, by substitution, ‘when consciousness interrogates consciousness.’ Sometimes the expression is still more involved, as ‘when *we* look into *our* own mind’ becomes, on substitution, ‘when mind looks into mind’s mind, or mind’s own mind.’ And there is here a still further sense of confusion implied in the ‘looking in’ as involving a sense operation in self-analysis of an ultimate nature where it can not apply.

The hardest task the self is called upon to perform is to divest itself of those *structures of thought* by which it has climbed to its present height; in other words, to conceive itself to be what it

discovers in the ultimate analysis of self. Here only dynamic processes are met with. No background or substance is discoverable. If any did enter, it is not conceivable how it could help matters.

Now if it be admitted that the whole cosmos, including the self as usually understood, is but a *construction* of thought, the main difficulty has still to be met; there is something more paradoxical. It would seem from the peculiarities of psychical evolution that this thought-constructed entirety has come to imagine itself constructed out of *material* which has *not* been used in its formation, and to be in a *locality* where it is *not*. And under these fictitious conditions, when it attempts its own analysis, when it attempts to break away from these imaginary material or supermaterial structures for the purpose of discovering its ultimate nature, it comes across an impassable barrier, and then is forced to construct parallelisms, etc.

Believing that such methods must always lead to confusion, it is proposed here to reverse the order; that is, to take what seems discoverable in ultimate analysis as the elements of this complex, and with these attempt the synthesis. But in order to discover these elements, the whole structure as at present conceived must be removed, at least in imagination. And in this general work of clearance not only the subjective construction, but the objective, the whole constructed cosmos, may in imagination be dispensed with. And if it further be assumed that space and time are the *binding materials* used in these constructions, and are themselves complexes of the structural elements, they must be in like manner cast aside. But thoughts also as ordinarily conceived may be here considered as structures composed of simpler elements, and so this fact has to be taken into consideration in attempts to discover these elements. The field may now be conceived as clear of all structural incumbrances, and the question may now be asked, is there any discoverable residual or persistence with no definite space or time characteristics?

Before this can be replied to, the terms in which a reply can now be made have to be considered. Since all language seems to have been built up to express constructed thought or thought constructions, this language is for the most part barred out in attempts to express unconstructed thought or the elements which enter into these constructions.

In this investigation it is proposed to describe actual or *pure* experience, that is, actual psychical performances as *felt* in their *unconstructed* relations in self-examination—excepting those psychical appearances usually termed images. For these a theory will be advanced as to their ultimate nature.

The first general theory to be advanced as a result of these investigations is that the whole objective and subjective world in the last analysis is found to be but *constructions* of the *feelings*. And to make this fully appear, the further theory is advanced that what we have usually termed images are in their ultimate analysis but specialized feelings.

Having now very inadequately prepared the way, a reply may be made to the above question, which is, that *feelings* may be *felt* to persist by themselves devoid of all constructions.

Of course, it is somewhat difficult for the *human-feeling-complex* to sufficiently clear away structural influence as to be able to *feel* its own feelings in this pure state; but it can imagine earlier stages of evolution where these feelings may be considered to exist devoid of all thought or feeling constructions, that is, to exist as feelings only. And the concern is here the fact of existence or persistence regardless of any constructed background. It is presumed here that not only may feelings so arise, but that they appear under a double aspect, as agreeable and unagreeable states. So it will be convenient now to term this feeling a primary feeling, and these aspects its primary aspects. Let it now be further assumed that there is a *telos*, or end, bound up with these feelings, so that there is a continuous striving for increase in volume, intensity and duration of agreeable states. And in some way, as a result of this striving and for the *purpose* of better reaching the goal, portions of these primary feelings become *specialized*, the peculiarity of this specialization being that these portions of the feelings have now more *prominent* and more active characteristics, but have lost the states of agreeableness or unagreeableness, and as a consequence they have not that *sticky* immobility of the primary feelings, these specialized feelings being what is usually referred to as intellectual characteristics—images, etc.

After this specialization, there takes place in this complex of the primary and specialized feelings a peculiar activity—intellectual—by which the whole cosmos gets constructed by and for this feeling-complex.

Of course, there is no concern here with what may exist or what existence can mean outside the feelings, the inquiry here being what existence comes to be to these complexes. And this would seem to be the only inquiry if what is here assumed be accepted, namely, *that the feelings can never get out of the circle of their own activities except by this constructive or imaginary process, that is, only by the feeling-complex feeling itself as something other than its real nature.*

Now assuming the feeling constructive elements to have been found and the constructive stimulus to be involved in the teleological principle, displayed in efforts to increase the quality, number and persistence of agreeable states, the whole constructed cosmos, including subject and object, would only appear as an incident in the development of the feelings, enabling them the better to reach their goal. And so their reason for existence would seem to be that they facilitate the evolution of the feelings in some of its higher phases. If the development could have proceeded unaided by this complex structural arrangement, so much *work*, it may be conceived, would have been saved. And the same reasoning applies to these complex activities considered as intellectual operations. These *specialized feelings* and their manipulation are, as it were, an after-thought, found necessary as the situations in which more desirable states could be obtained became more complex. So that intellectual activities regarded by themselves may be considered as the mechanism or *tools* found necessary after psychical evolution had proceeded to a certain degree of complexity, and on account of the extra work their employment involves they are always abandoned as soon as the primary feelings *learn to feel* their way without their aid.

On a superficial view it may seem somewhat absurd to attribute anything like purpose to the feelings, as such. But why is it more absurd to attribute purpose to the feeling elements than to the feeling-complex, or self? It is a profound mystery in either case. But it may be observed in self-examination that what are here termed the primary or undifferentiated feelings are the *courts of last resort*, whose decisions are always final, after what, with a little exaggeration, might be termed the mechanical manipulation of the specialized feelings. Now although in ultimate analysis the whole cosmic structure comes out as a structure of the feelings and so in a sense may be considered fictitious, this in no way detracts from the exceeding usefulness of conceiving this structure as real, or even as absolute necessity in the higher complexes for conserving life and aiding in the acquisition of higher agreeable states, and even for explanations of some of the phases of the feelings themselves. And to the extent of its *usefulness* in these ways it should be employed, so that the criterion for the employment of this feeling structure would seem to be its *usefulness*, considered from the point of view of development. If it now be assumed that the *materials* and the *impetus* employed in the formation of self have been found, the question arises, can a rational theory be advanced by which this *structure* may be considered to have come into existence? In other words, can it be shown how by the complex activities of the feeling

elements the self, and also the not-self, came to be? This is what will now be attempted.

All indications go to show that the first structure, the first *feeling-cluster*, formed was matter or substance, and the way in which this came to be may be imagined as follows: Assuming first that the simplest form of psychical life consists in simple responses to stimulus by what has been here termed the primary feelings, the responses being attractive if the stimulus is conducive to the preservation or enhancement of agreeable states, and repellant if the reverse; then from the continued striving for more and higher agreeable states there seems to result an accommodative variation in the feelings themselves, so that details can be appreciated, or a greater degree of agreeableness can be obtained from the same stimulus, and more abundant sources of satisfaction discovered. Or, to put it another way: In the simple feeling complexes the feeling of contact must precede the setting up of states of agreeableness or the reverse; but after the development of the specialized feelings these states may be set up in the absence of or in anticipation of the feelings of contact. There then seems to take place a development in the relations of these special feelings; the principal of these relations appearing as a grouping factor, and the feelings of expectancy and order arising normally out of these relations, as will now be made evident.

As a result of what may now be termed a law of the feelings, and may be expressed as efforts to extract the maximum of agreeable states from all sources, there arise explorations and experimentation often in advance of ordinary stimulus, and in these operations a greater or less number of specialized feelings come into prominence. And after a number of like experiences these several feelings form themselves into a cluster or group; that is, they tend to recur together, giving a complex feeling in which the several feelings as such are submerged, and the group characteristic rises into prominence. This group feeling now so persists that when later one or more of the specific feelings composing this group are stimulated—a sight or touch feeling, for instance—this group feeling comes so much into prominence as to deceive the feeling complex into the belief that its presence is now due, as formerly, to the presence of the whole stimulus. But all through the earlier stages in the formation of these group feelings there are taking place specific activities of the specialized feelings—which may be termed verification—which are of the utmost importance in determining not only the future permanence of these clusters, but also the future attitude of the feeling complex towards them. For instance, on experiencing a new

cluster or group, the specific feelings which enter into its composition may be as *prominent* as the *group feeling*. There then arises the feeling of uneasiness—an unagreeable state—and this seems always to stimulate the specific feelings into renewed activity to again establish an orderly, comfortable feeling. Say, with a new group feeling there arises into prominence its visual ingredient. There may then arise a disturbed state due to the absence of permanency or *familiarity*. This state then stimulates further experimentation, and a touch feeling—the complement of the group feeling—results. Then there is immediately a sinking into the usual quiescent state, which in some way seems to establish the registration and permanency of this group feeling. It now comes to persist as a part of the *furniture* of the feeling complex, and when again it is stimulated into existence by any of its component elements there is no disturbance stimulating further experimentation, but a quiescent, familiar feeling,—what some have termed an exhausted state,—now persists: it *begins to feel as the thing there* and is said now to *be known*. And this arises solely through these feeling operations. But this attitude only applies to specific group feelings, which themselves become segregated from groups or clusters which do not give rise to this exhausted feeling, the feeling of *no-need-for-further-experimentation*. And still later these groups form into a cluster by themselves, a cluster in which the specific feelings have a greatly diminished prominence and the primary feelings seem to take a more active part in establishing the permanence of these complex clusters—general conceptions. Again, clusters which have an orderly variant—self-motion—also form groups by themselves, and later more complex groupings as in the former case; and there now arise those peculiar feelings of separation and distinctness, and the specific groups are expressed as dead and live things and, more generally, as dead and living matter or substance. Then innumerable classifications arise in these respective groups, determined by the discoverable specific variants therein. And there comes bound up with these group characteristics those nascent spatial feelings of a *thereness*, a *hereness* and a *betweenness*. Then as this segregation and grouping further advances, involving explorations of self, understood in a psychical sense, there arises the complex feeling of *something here like something there*. And then as greater distinction arises, a *body here like bodies there*; and, again, a *living body here like living bodies there*. And this is the first and *material* construction of self. This appears to have arisen normally, and in advance of self-consciousness, or before the rise of any ability to

reflect on the process. And it is well to observe carefully here this order of formation so as the better to avoid the usual confusion which arises when self-analysis is attempted. This formation commences from what is then felt as *outside* substance, and is consequently felt as outside substance in the early stages of its formation. But in more advanced stages in the development of the *human-feeling-complex*, the beginnings of self-consciousness, there arises a marvelous change in the program. It is now as if this complex was, as it were, for the first time let in behind the scenes, but the extreme novelty of the situation and indistinctness of vision causes the whole to be misinterpreted; or, in other words, these feeling complexes begin to feel the elements which enter into their own composition, but as they do not readily take on the constructive characteristics of all former experiences, but remain, as it were, *disembodied*, the greatest difficulty is felt in *placing* them. Now it appears that whenever the equilibrium, or the habitual states of this feeling complex, is disturbed, there always arise unagreeable feelings—irritation—which in turn stimulate the specialized feelings into those activities which will result in restoring the equilibrium or former habitual quiescent states. So now when these new, unordered and disembodied feelings are first experienced, they cause that irritation and the consequent setting up of the above-described psychical or feeling activities. But operation being limited by former methods of procedure and, as in this case, no *constructions* seeming normally to follow, resource is had to invention. And so a body is invented to contain these erratic presentations, and by this means quiescence is temporarily restored. But there seems ever to have existed a puzzle as to the form and locality of this invented body or envelop—this self-content. And this difficulty seems to have kept up a much more lively attitude towards these peculiar feelings and their makeshift construction than was usually displayed towards the more classifiable groups. Various forms have been imagined which have been *placed* in different localities in the *constructed* body—here material body—but its form in later times seems to have become so attenuated and altered in shape as to fit in turn comfortably the supposed material body itself and cause no inconvenience. And this is the general conception of self to-day—the objective self, the ‘me.’

But it is desired here to ascertain what self is in ultimate analysis, the subjective self. If the total is made up of feeling states, there must be some peculiarities in these feelings, their activities or grouping, which cause a portion to seem to stand out as self and the remainder as the not-self.

While there is the feeling of order in both groups, continuity in the feeling activities and immediate verification seem to constitute the main factors in the self group, in contradistinction to discontinuity and only mediate verification as factors of the not-self group. But as the primary feelings are among the constituents of immediate verification, they are thus involved in the immediate appearances or associations of these feelings with the self group. And this gives the feeling of close proximity of the primary feelings in the self. But in mediate verification the primary feelings do not seem to be projected as do the specialized feelings and their groupings which constitute the not-self.

That this immediate verification or reassurance which is a constituent of the self group is of the utmost importance for maintaining this group formation, may be readily seen. For instance, throughout the whole of the wakeful state, in addition to what is understood as the ordinary intellectual processes, there is going on a continuous but vaguely conscious record from what may now be conceived as various parts of the body which are immediately interpreted as a feeling of *here*, although they seldom disturb the ordinary psychical activities unless something goes wrong. If, say, while the subject is engaged in a train of thought one hand *involuntarily* passes over to rest on the other, and instead of the usual or expected feeling of softness and warmth there arises, say, a feeling of hardness and coldness, there will arise an immediate break in the train of thought, however deep it may have been, and all attention is turned to the investigation of this unusual occurrence. There seems to be an immediate necessity for a straightening-out process. This movement-feeling in ultimate analysis—which had it taken place in the usual way might have been wholly unconscious—has now risen into a position of first importance; something has happened to a *reassuring factor* which must be immediately adjusted, as it seems to involve a break or even a rupture in the continuity of the self complex.

Many experiments may be made demonstrating the absolute necessity of this immediate verifying or reassuring process for the holding together of the self complex, but they can not be given here. But one can imagine the predicament of the intellect in being suddenly isolated from all means of verification without knowing why or being able to give some cause for it.

To sum up. The psychical self, or feeling complex, can only feel itself as feeling entirely *disembodied*, although group formations seem to take place, and some of these seem to evolve to such a

marvelous state of complexity as to be able to feel their own elements and even their own structural formation.

But this seems to reverse the order as to what can be known. For here the self, or feeling complex, can know itself as a feeling complex, but can never know of a background or substance. For all *otherness* must come to it as structures of the feelings. So that this so-called matter, which was always thought of as the one thing certainly known, must always remain a profound mystery.

But although this dynamic and disembodied self is the only one logically revealed in ultimate analysis, it may be found convenient for all practical purposes of life to regard it as related to a specific part of this psychically constructed entirety which I call *my* body in the relation of function to organ.

And if this be done there does not seem now to arise any impassable gulf or any need of a parallelism.

E. A. NORRIS.

ALBANY, N. Y.

DISCUSSION

THE FUNCTION OF THOUGHT

IN a discussion in Vol. III., No. 15, of this JOURNAL, Professor Santayana deals with the complaints of ambiguity in his conception of the function of thought as expounded in his 'Life of Reason.' Professor Santayana's treatment consists in reducing to metaphor all the passages in 'The Life of Reason' which speak of thought as a reconstruction of mechanical processes; and in frankly accepting thought as a mere 'accompaniment,' a 'lyric cry' of the mechanical processes. To many this method, in so far as it succeeds in curing the ambiguity, may seem worse than the original malady.

I say 'in so far,' for even here where the issue is up for explicit discussion, I confess I find that some of Professor Santayana's sentences still puzzle me. Thus in the eighth thesis (p. 411) regarding the function of thought, which Professor Santayana says represents his own view, after reading that 'thought is without efficacy either in its moral or its existential capacity,' we find immediately following that 'thought might still be called efficacious in the only sense, not magical, in which its efficacy would be at all congruous with its intent; namely, *through the natural efficacy* of the creature whose life it expressed.'¹ What do 'through' and

¹ Italics mine.